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MARTHA, JÉRÔME, APTEKAR' AND MARK (1946)

From: LONDON

To: MOSCOW

No: 776

17 July 1966

To DIRECTOR.

1. According to information from MARTHA[MARTA][i] and from the press, JÉRÔME[ZHEROM][ii] is successfully consolidating his position in the French group here. At the moment he is busy organizing French technical [1 group unrecovered] for the requirements of the British war industry. He has already been received by the Minister of Supply and has a letter of recommendation to another minister. The press writes about him favourably and puts him third in order after General de GAULLE[gaule].

2. In spite of my tact, they were both[a] somewhat surprised by the nature of my questions and assignments. Previously he provided only political intelligence [INFORMATSIYA], while she worked in the international Trade Union movement. Comrade ShVERNIX[iv] apparently knows her through this work. I explained to them that they both had opportunities of helping us. She was formerly a member of the German CORPORATION[KORPORATSIYA][v] and though he is not a member of the Party, he is sympathetic towards us and he was in SPAIN.

3. He will [B] continue with the General until [he receives][b] your [C] instructions[ya]. If [1 group unrecovered] he will go where you instruct him [to go][b]. MARTHA declares that around JÉRÔME and her husband a group of Frenchmen [B] is forming who might agree to any sort of negotiations directed against Fascism[vii]. JÉRÔME is taking steps to get an officer friend of his nominated to the post of Commander of the Air Force[viii]. In order to carry out your assignment JÉRÔME will collect material under the pretence of writing a book on the subject of the defeat of GASTRONOMIA[GASTRONOMIYA][ix].

DISTRIBUTION

[Continued overleaf]

4. Last night MARTHA passed me some material [on][b] an invention by a French engineer for the improvement of bombing. This material is due to be handed over to the British. This morning the material was returned after being photographed. The material is in French and is accompanied by the appropriate drawings. Having formerly worked in the Ministère de l'Air [MINISTERSTVO AVIATsII][x], JÉRÔME snapped up the material.

5. JÉRÔME used to be paid according to the job in GASTRONOMIA. I confirmed that this would go on here as well. Apparently MARTHA did not get anything before, apart from occasional help from CACHIN[KASHEN][xi]. Since she will get very little as JÉRÔME's secretary, I promised to give her financial support. Politically she is stronger than JÉRÔME and influences him.

6. We came to an agreement that contact would be through MARTHA only. JÉRÔME, incidentally, speaks English badly. Please give [RE] permission to make APTEKAR[xii] or MARK[xiii] the contact with her.

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BARCH[xiv]

Notes: [a] i.e. MARTHA and JÉRÔME.

[b] Inserted by translator.

Comments: ✓ [i] MARTHA: Probably Alta Martha LECOUTRE (with aliases), secretary of André LABARTHE and wife of Stanislas SZYMONCZYK (with aliases): was mistress of Pierre cot Minister for Air 1938-39.

✓ [ii] JÉRÔME: Probably André LABARTHE, Director-General of French Armament and Scientific Research in General de GAULLE's Administration June-September 1940. Also occurs in LONDON's No. 741 of 8th July 1940 (3/NBF/T4773) and No. 2151 of 6th August 1941 (3/NBF/T4777).

[iii] At the 14th July ceremony at the Cenotaph with General de GAULLE "were Vice-Admiral MUSELIER, M. LABARTHE (Director-General of Technical Services) and other officers in French uniform". ("The Times", 15th July 1940.)

✓ [iv] ShVERNIK: Nikolaj Nikhajlovich ShVERNIK, First Secretary of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions 1930-1944.

✓ [v] CORPORATION: Communist Party.

[vi] LABARTHE left General de GAULLE's Administration in the autumn of 1940. ("Mémoires de Guerre", Général de GAULLE, Vol. 1 Ch. 5.)

[vii] According to General de GAULLE, a plot against his Administration involved allegations that it was inclined to Fascism (ibid. Ch. 8.)

[viii] If the information about JÉRÔME dates from before 1st July 1940, his officer friend may be Vice-Admiral MUSELIER. On 1st July 1940 General de GAULLE appointed Vice-Admiral MUSELIER, who had escaped to ENGLAND, as Commander of the Free French naval and air forces. (Keesing's Contemporary Archives.)

Comments: [ix] GASTRONOMIA: Coverword for FRANCE.  
[Cont'd]

[x] LABARTHE did his military service at the Physical Research Laboratory, French Air Ministry 1927-1928. In 1934 he was appointed scientific collaborator to the Department of Research, French Air Ministry. Later he became private secretary to the Technical Director of the Under-Secretary's Department for Air.

✓ [xi] CACHIN: Marcel CACHIN, a prominent French Communist.

✓ [xii] APTEKAR': Nikolaï Vladimirovich APTEKAR' was a chauffeur at the Soviet Embassy in LONDON from 1937 to 1944, first to the Naval Attaché and by 1939 to the military and Air Attaché, Ivan CHERNIJ. If a real name is not intended here, the word could be a covername, translated as PHARMACIST.

✓ [xiii] MARK: Unidentified, presumably a covername. Also occurs in LONDON's No. 2150 of 6th August 1941 (3/NBF/T1476).

✓ [xiv] BARCH: Unidentified covername LONDON addressee and signatory 30th March 1940 - 22nd August 1940.